FOUNDATION IN ACTION

FOUNDATION SaaS Catches at Accurate Firestop

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A specialty subcontractor responsible for fire-stopping, fireproofing and insulation for some of the Bay Area's biggest tech companies and more, Accurate Firestop has built a reputation true to its name. After they began serving the residential, commercial and industrial markets over 20 years ago, however, Accurate had used a popular off-the-shelf accounting program — plus a lot of spreadsheets. So it didn't take much growth before they found it wasn't the best long-term solution for their business.

Sounding the Alarm

"We wanted to get our job costing more accurate," says executive director Gabrielle Lucatero. "At the time, it felt like we couldn't entirely trust our numbers." Job costing was central to what Accurate was trying to do. They wanted to give their estimators better feedback to help them improve their bidding and increase profits, but recognizing their multiple profit centers, cost categories and cost levels just wasn't what their small business software majored in. And that wasn't the only source of friction with their old software.

"I did not enjoy using it," Gabrielle puts it plainly. Support was difficult to get a hold of, she recalls, and that could leave Accurate Firestop with significant downtime while they fended for themselves. Finally, there was the potential for some pretty major security concerns that they wanted to feel better about. The availability of user security restrictions had been minimal, meaning that once someone was in the system, in theory, they could
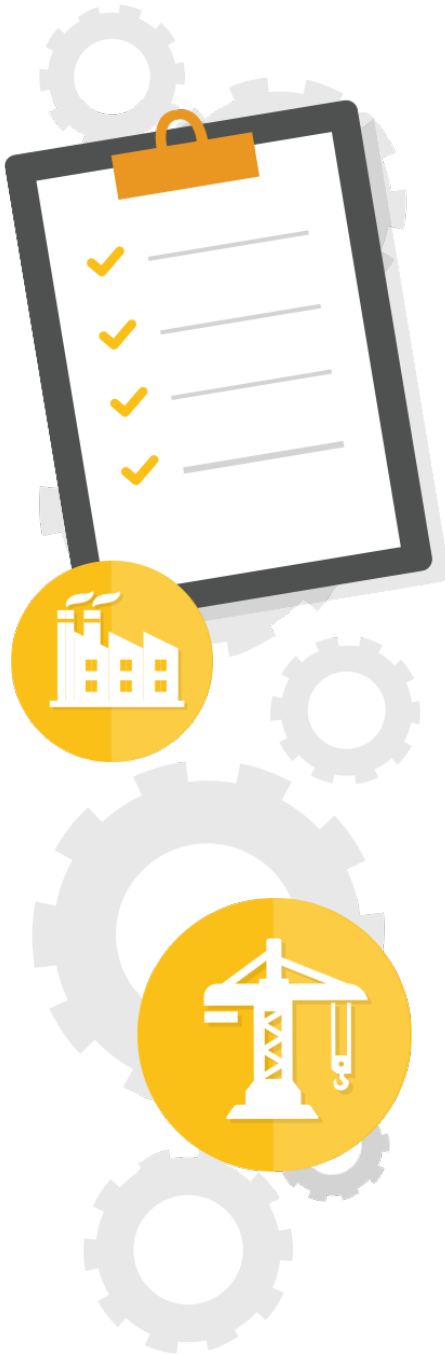
FOUNDATION software

simply change numbers in Accurate Firestop's accounting — even as an accident. No backups, no audit trail, no peace of mind. Bottom line, they needed to know they could trust their own accuracy.

Kindling a Spark

Gabrielle began the hunt for construction-specific accounting software. Her research brought her around to FOUNDATION SaaS cloud-based job cost, project management and mobile software. The online and live demos showed her the inside of the system in detail, and they impressed her. "Another thing that was really important to us," she remembers, "the service and support team was the best I'd heard about." So FOUNDATION SaaS ticked all of the boxes — but even more importantly, says Gabrielle, "It seemed like it suited us." In a word, it felt right.

"The implementation was awesome," Gabrielle says unequivocally, "and extremely thorough." Accurate Firestop was assigned their own software trainer, Melissa, who walked them through the set-up and implementation — and even helped them build custom reports especially for their business. "We absolutely love Melissa." And for a system with a lot of functionality and a heavy load of features available, "Everyone in the office understands how to use it and has been functioning very well."

Meanwhile, their control over their accounting has increased since making the switch. "The thing that I think was most important to us was that FOUNDATION has a lot more security than a lot of other programs." Beyond user-based authentication factors for logging in, Accurate Firestop can easily set the exact modules, tools and reports that they want each user to be able to view or access — or simply use full-access defaults. Additionally, optional project manager security settings restrict users to only those jobs assigned to them. So while their Project Management Module keeps all of their job documents in one place, Accurate Firestop's employees can see only what they need to and nothing they shouldn't.

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System controls also go the extra mile to reduce entry errors and ensure data integrity. And that makes Accurate Firestop feel good. "The system is set up to make you really accurate," she says. FOUNDATION SaaS' multiple dimensions of accounting and cross-module integration mean that journals have to tie out with the G/L, helping to ensure balanced books from every angle: "It holds us accountable." And a complete audit trail records every transaction, correction and reversal in the system, so every number is traceable to its origin.

Sharing Warm Feelings

In the end, Accurate Firestop found even more than they were initially looking for. FOUNDATION SaaS' change order tracking has improved communication between the billing and operations departments; timecard imports and automatic certified payroll reports have saved countless hours; and their project document organization has reached a whole other level. But more than a software application, they found a partnership with Foundation Software they're happy to carry forward. Gabrielle is a fan especially of Foundation's consulting services: "It's been really good for training us in additional reporting. Anything new we've wanted to add, whenever we need to implement a new solution, it's been fantastic." And she adds happily, "We still use Melissa primarily!"

"Across the board," Gabrielle concludes, "everything feels like it's catered to us. It's what we need and what we were looking for. I think overall it's the best software we've used or seen. It's worth it; just everything Foundation offers is worth getting."